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Adoption of the report of the Committee on its fifty-sixth session

Draft report

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Addendum

Proposed strategic framework for the period 2018-2019
(*Item 3 (b) (ii)*)

Programme 2
Political affairs

1. At its 15th meeting, on 8 June 2016, the Committee considered programme 2, Political affairs, of the proposed strategic framework for the period 2018-2019 (A/71/6 (Prog. 2) and Corr.1). The Committee also had before it a note by the Secretariat on the proposed strategic framework, contained in conference room paper E/AC.51/2016/CRP.1/Rev.1.

2. The representative of the Secretary-General introduced the programme and responded to queries raised during the Committee's consideration of the programme.

Discussion

3. Appreciation and support were expressed for the programme and for the important work carried out in the area of maintenance of international peace and security by the various entities under the programme.

4. Delegations expressed their support for the work of the Department of Political Affairs, in particular in the areas of conflict prevention and mediation. The delegations also expressed the need for the Department to continue to work with regional and subregional organizations in supporting mediation activities so as to ensure their ownership of the processes.

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5. Delegations also stressed that improvement in the capacity of the United Nations to prevent and resolve conflicts was a better investment than dealing with the cost of armed conflict and its aftermath.

6. Delegations noted that multiple United Nations entities were involved in the mediation efforts in Africa, and stressed the need for the Secretary-General to bring synergies and avoid overlap and duplication of efforts.

7. Information was sought on the source and mandate for the use of the phrase "preventative diplomacy". The view was expressed that the implementation of preventive diplomacy was currently being discussed by the Security Council and was a sensitive matter, and that the use of it to address issues relating to international peace and security should be through an impartial approach. It was also pointed out that "other organizations", mentioned in paragraphs 2.1 and 2.5, needed to be elaborated and clarified. The view was also expressed that resident coordinators should not be assigned political roles.

8. Clarification was sought on the basis and the legislative mandate for the proposed splitting of subprogramme 1, Prevention, management and resolution of conflicts, into two subprogrammes, and whether any functional body had reviewed the proposal. The question was raised as to whether the proposal was consistent with the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation (ST/SGB/2016/6), and whether it carried an expectation of an increase in the overall number of activities. With reference to ongoing discussions in the Fifth Committee on a request for additional resources for the Department of Political Affairs, a delegation sought clarification on whether the proposal contained in the strategic framework did not prejudge the outcome of those discussions. It was recalled that reviews had been carried out recently on mediation and prevention capacities, and, in that context, clarifications were sought on how the Department planned to strengthen mediation and prevention activities, build synergies and overcome possible duplication of efforts with other entities involved in those areas.

9. Views were expressed that the emphasis on the quantitative approach to the formulation of some indicators of achievement, with particular regard to subprogrammes 1 and 2, did not sufficiently emphasize the impact or results to be achieved, while the formulation of other indicators of achievement did not indicate progress or an improvement. Views were also expressed with regard to the challenge of measuring the qualitative aspects of the work of the programme.

10. With regard to subprogramme 1, Prevention, management and resolution of conflicts, it was noted that indicators of achievement (a) (iii) and (iv) did not reflect any achievement as such, and needed improvement. Clarification was sought on the meaning of "emerging crisis situations" in indicator of achievement (a) (iv). Information was also sought on how indicator of achievement (b), Increased percentage of all requests of Member States and regional organizations in support of the peace process having resulted in preventing, mitigating or resolving conflict situations, would be measured by the Department of Political Affairs and how the information would be used to adjust the Department's activities in the future. Information was further sought on why the reference to monitoring and evaluation of the impact and the cost-effectiveness of key conflict prevention and mitigation initiatives, mentioned in paragraph 2.7 of programme 2 of the biennial programme plan for the period 2016-2017, had been deleted.

11. With regard to the new Gender Unit under subprogramme 2, Policy and mediation support, views were expressed in support and appreciation of its establishment, as well as the activities relating to strengthening the role of women in the maintenance of peace and security. Clarification was sought on the Unit's role and how it would build on Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), as well as on the existing gender advisers and the interface with the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women while ensuring that there would be no overlap in functions. It was suggested that firm targets be established for the role of women in mediation.

12. Concerning subprogramme 3, Electoral assistance, the view was expressed that the objective contained in the biennial programme plan for the period 2016-2017 was accurate and did not need to be revised. It was noted that requests for assistance relating to elections should come from Member States, not field missions. The view was expressed that electoral assistance should be considered a crisis prevention activity, as support provided to establish more reliable electoral systems could avoid recurring crises, and that the crisis prevention role of electoral assistance was not adequately reflected in the framework.

13. Concerning subprogramme 4, Security Council affairs, the use of the term "other participants" in expected accomplishment (a) needed clarification. Concern was expressed with regard to the use of the term "substantive advice" in paragraph 2.15, as it might be interpreted as influencing the work of experts who were appointed in their individual and professional capacities.

14. Regarding subprogramme 5, Decolonization, the view was expressed that the objective contained in the biennial programme plan for the period 2016-2017 was accurate and did not need to be revised. It was pointed out that proposed indicator of achievement (ii), Improved communication between the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples and the administering Powers, was vague and difficult to measure. Clarification was sought in particular on the meaning of "administering Powers".

15. With regard to subprogramme 6, Question of Palestine, clarification was sought on the revised expected accomplishment for 2018-2019, in particular on the removal of the phrase "and the Division for Palestinian Rights" from the expected accomplishment.

16. Concerning subprogramme 7, Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force, it was pointed out that the use of the term "violent extremism" in indicator of achievement (a) and the linkage of the subprogramme to the mandate needed to be clarified. The view was expressed that Security Council resolutions 2170 (2014), 2178 (2014) and 2199 (2015), pertaining to counter-terrorism, should be included in the list of legislative mandates. Clarification was sought on the mandate and responsibility for the establishment of the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre.

17. With regard to subprogramme 8, Office of the United Nations Special Coordination for the Middle East Peace Process, the view was expressed that the reference to Member States in the last sentence of paragraph 2.21 of the strategy should not be limited only to those in the Arab world, and that the formulation should read "Member States, especially in the Arab world". Clarification was sought on the meaning of "Palestinian priorities and systems", described in paragraph 2.22.

18. With regard to subprogramme 9, Peacebuilding Support Office, the view was expressed that the objective contained in the biennial programme plan for the period 2016-2017 was accurate and did not need to be revised. It was pointed out that most of the indicators of achievement, as formulated, did not provide an indication of progress, and that the formulation of the indicators of achievement should include language so providing. The view was expressed that specific references should be made to Security Council resolution 2282 (2016) and General Assembly resolution 70/262 in paragraph 2.26 of the strategy, and that the resolutions should be included in the list of legislative mandates.

19. Concerning subprogramme 10, United Nations Register of Damage Caused by the Construction of the Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, clarification was sought on the expected rate of collection of claim forms, in particular why the phrase "about 80 per cent" had been replaced with the words "the majority" in paragraph 2.30 of the strategy.

20. Regarding subprogramme 11, United Nations Office to the African Union, clarification was sought on the exclusion of a reference to the Office in the overall orientation for the framework. Clarity was also sought regarding challenges encountered from the dichotomy of funding the Office through extrabudgetary resources and the support account for peacekeeping and the value of consolidating the resource requirements under the programme budget.

Conclusions and recommendations

21. **The Committee recommended that the General Assembly approve the programme narrative of programme 2, Political Affairs, of the proposed strategic framework for the period 2018-2019, subject to the following modifications:**

Overall orientation

Paragraph 2.1

In the first sentence, replace "under the direction of" with "the resolutions emanating from".

Replace the second sentence with:

"The direction of the programme is provided in the pertinent resolutions of the Assembly and the mandates of the Council, which has the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security."

Paragraph 2.2

In the first sentence, replace the words "the best foundation" with "a sound foundation".

Replace the last sentence with:

"The Department will continue to support Member States in their efforts towards the prevention of armed conflicts through means of diplomacy, sustaining peace and peacebuilding, including in partnership with international, regional and subregional organizations, international financial institutions, civil society

organizations, women's groups, youth organizations and the private sector, taking into account national priorities and policies, in accordance with relevant mandates."

Paragraph 2.4

Delete paragraph 2.4 and renumber subsequent paragraphs accordingly.

Paragraph 2.4 (formerly 2.5)

Replace the second, third and fourth sentences with:

"The Department of Political Affairs will continue to strive to reinforce the capacity of Member States, the international community and regional organizations for preventive diplomacy, good offices and non-military measures to prevent potentially violent disputes from escalating into conflicts, as well as to resolve violent conflicts that have erupted, while fully respecting the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of Member States and the principle of non-intervention in matters that are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any State, as well as respecting the principle of consent, which is an essential element for the success of such efforts."

Subprogramme 1
Prevention, management and resolution of conflicts

Replace the objectives of the Organization, expected accomplishments of the Secretariat, indicators of achievement and strategies of subprogramme 1, Prevention, management and resolution of conflicts, and subprogramme 2, Policy and mediation support, with:

"Subprogramme 1
Prevention, management and resolution of conflicts

Objective of the Organization: **To promote international peace and security through prevention, management and resolution of conflicts by peaceful means**	
Expected accomplishments of the Secretariat	***Indicators of achievement***
(a) Improved capacity and capability of Member States to identify, prevent and address conflict situations	**(i) 100 per cent response to all requests of Member States and regional organizations for preventive action**
	(ii) Number of good offices efforts to address conflict situations where the United Nations was asked to assist
	(iii) Increased percentage of women in mediation efforts where the United Nations is involved

Objective of the Organization: To promote international peace and security through prevention, management and resolution of conflicts by peaceful means	
Expected accomplishments of the Secretariat	***Indicators of achievement***
(b) Effective maintenance of peace processes	**(i) Increased percentage of all requests of Member States and regional organizations in support of the peace process having resulted in preventing, mitigating or resolving conflict situations** **(ii) Increased number of peacebuilding projects implemented in support of efforts to prevent, manage or resolve conflicts**

Strategy

2.7 Substantive responsibility for the subprogramme is vested in the regional divisions and the Policy and Mediation Division. The Department will promote a more effective and cohesive response to help prevent, mitigate, manage and resolve conflicts and to address peacebuilding challenges facing countries emerging from crisis or conflict by: (a) responding in a timely manner to conflict situations; (b) providing timely and accurate information, analysis and policy options; (c) formulating recommendations on measures that could be undertaken by the United Nations system; (d) making available and providing substantive and technical support to the Secretary-General's good offices, including through formal mediation, where appropriate; (e) providing substantive, political and technical support to the Secretary-General in the discharge of his functions and in his relationships with Member States; (f) enhancing the capacity of regional and subregional organizations; (g) providing substantive support and guidance to special political missions; (h) strengthening the Department's capacity, expertise and partnerships with other United Nations and subregional, regional and international organizations in order to address more effectively peace and security challenges, especially in non-mission settings; (i) undertaking monitoring and evaluation of the impact and the cost-effectiveness of key conflict prevention and mitigation initiatives; (j) undertaking research on peacebuilding issues and best practices; (k) developing coherent strategies for crisis prevention and post-conflict peacebuilding, linking diplomatic, security, humanitarian and developmental efforts by the United Nations system and other international and regional actors; (l) enhancing political and operational links with the Peacebuilding Commission, Support Office and Fund. To this end, the Department of Political Affairs will work closely with other relevant parts of the United Nations system; and (m) empowering women in peacebuilding and mediation efforts."

Renumber subsequent subprogrammes and paragraphs accordingly.

Subprogramme 2 (formerly subprogramme 3)
Electoral assistance

Indicators of achievement

In indicators of achievement (a) (i) and (ii), delete the words "or field missions".

Subprogramme 3 (formerly subprogramme 4)
Security Council affairs

Expected accomplishments of the Secretariat

Replace expected accomplishment (a) with:

> **"Improved organizational and procedural aspects of meetings servicing as well as enhanced substantive and technical secretariat support to the Member States and other participants at the mandated meetings".**

Indicators of achievement

At the beginning of indicator of achievement (a), insert "Increased".

Subprogramme 4 (formerly subprogramme 5)
Decolonization

Replace the objective of the Organization, expected accomplishments of the Secretariat and indicators of achievement of the subprogramme with:

Objective of the Organization: **To promote the decolonization process in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and relevant resolutions of the General Assembly for the 17 Non-Self-Governing Territories so as to bring about the complete eradication of colonialism**	
Expected accomplishments of the Secretariat	***Indicators of achievement***
The Special Committee and the General Assembly will be able to carry out their decolonization mandates and make progress in the decolonization process of the 17 Non-Self-Governing Territories	**(i) Timely submission of parliamentary documents** **(ii) Sustained level of support to the work of the Special Committee in facilitating communication with the administering Powers**

Subprogramme 5 (formerly subprogramme 6)
Question of Palestine

Strategy

Paragraph 2.13 (formerly 2.19)

After the second sentence, insert:

"Supportive action by the United Nations will continue until all aspects of the question of Palestine are resolved in a satisfactory manner in accordance with international law."

Subprogramme 6 (formerly subprogramme 7)
Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force

Indicators of achievement

At the end of indicator of achievement (a), insert "as and when conducive to terrorism".

Subprogramme 7 (formerly subprogramme 8)
Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process

Paragraph 2.16 (formerly 2.22)

In the last sentence, replace "systems" with "institutions".

Subprogramme 8 (formerly subprogramme 9)
Peacebuilding Support Office

Objective of the Organization

Replace the objective of the Organization with "To enhance consolidation of peace in post-conflict countries".

Indicators of achievement

At the beginning of indicators of achievement (a) (i), (ii) and (iii), insert "Increased".

Replace indicator of achievement (a) (iv) with:

"Increased percentage of recommendations of General Assembly resolution 70/262 on the review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture and Security Council resolution 2282 (2016) on post-conflict peacebuilding implemented".

At the beginning of indicator of achievement (c), insert the word "Increased".

Paragraph 2.20 (formerly 2.26)

In the first sentence, replace "the resolutions" with "General Assembly resolution 70/262 and Security Council resolution 2282 (2016)".

Legislative mandates

Subprogramme 1
Prevention, management and resolution of conflicts

General Assembly resolutions

Add:

70/109 A world against violence and violent extremism

Subprogramme 9
Peacebuilding Support Office

General Assembly resolutions

Add:

70/262 Review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture

Security Council resolutions

Add:

2282 (2016) Post-conflict peacebuilding